

Is Equisetum ruled by Comets

Glen Atkinson - Feb 2018 v3

This essay is offered in the spirit of 'peer review', and is the second part of my 'Equisetum, Kidneys and Fungus' article. In that article I suggested my frontrunner for a planetary rulership of Equisetum, would not be one of the planets, but the process active between Mars 1 and Venus 2, as described by Dr Lievegoed. This conclusion was reached after following up, through the medical lectures, RS's suggestion, that we look into Equisetum's activity with the human kidney, if we wish to understand Equisetum's use in Fungal control.

The more widely accepted ruler of Equisetum is the planet Venus, with the Goethean study provided by Dr Friedwart Husemann— 'Equisetum, the Kidney and the Planet Venus' (6) - providing the significant relationships and insights needed to make this judgment.

In contrast to these findings, we have a contribution from Hugh Courtney (HC), with an article that has been circulating the UK and Australian BD Associations magazines. Within it he makes a string of connections and assumptions between what Dr Rudolf Steiner (RS) has said about comets, to Equisetum being ruled by them, through to the Moon in Biodynamics, being a masculine formative influence. (2)

Dr Steiner, and the other source material cited (1,3,4) on comets, do not make mention of Equisetum. Suggesting Hugh's essay is the result of his own string of conjectures.

Hugh's suggestion is based on his interpretation of the metaphorical story, provided within a lecture given on the 5th March 1910. (1), as part of the cycle on 'The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric'. He also draws on other general Anthroposophical understandings, around the basic theme of this lecture.

While I question this 'comet ruling Equisetum' assumption, the main issue I have concern with, is his further characterisation of the Moon as a Masculine principle, within the context of Biodynamics, solely based upon his interpretation of this metaphor. He makes no reference to all the Moon as a Feminine formative force, imagery used throughout the Agriculture Course. His 'Moon Conjecture' also goes against 3000 years of Astrological understanding, of the 'Being of the Moon', as the Mother, the reproductive life force Demeter controls. She is the builder of family as the ruler of Cancer, and of the home by ruling the fourth house. This is the land base upon which your tribe survives. It is upon this heritage, that we have RS characterising the Moon throughout the Agriculture Lectures, as the primary female opposite to the Male Sun. HC does not address any of this.

Given Hugh's saintly standing within the USA BD community, and how widely his view is being circulated, I fear these proposals may cause immense confusion in an audience, who have been trained (or not) to see the Moon as female, the mother of the reproductive force RS describes several times throughout the course.

It is appropriate to read what RS says, and then see what HC does with it. A further treatise worth referencing is provided by R.S. Bobbette— The Cosmic Feminine: Steiner's view of Cometary Life. (3). Dr Vreede also addresses the place of comets in her 'Astronomical Letters', (5) and clarifies some of Dr Steiner's claims, however she does not provide anything new on this topic. All reference the same base stories.

1 — Dr Steiner's 1910 lecture

<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/Dates/19100305p01.html>

2 — Hugh's article as provided by the Australia BDA magazine Newsleaf.

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=6&ved=0ahUKEwi6roy-mP7YAhXGerwKHa0AAAdEQFghMMAU&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdev.biodynamics.net.au%2Fwp-content%](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=6&ved=0ahUKEwi6roy-mP7YAhXGerwKHa0AAAdEQFghMMAU&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdev.biodynamics.net.au%2Fwp-content%2F)

2Fuploads%2F94-News-Leaf.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2MjJI3YOEDGF9nLp7IUUmZh

3— RSW Bobbette, The Cosmic Feminine: Steiner's view of Cometary Life

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4 — Lecture 8 Astronomy Course—1921

<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/Dates/19210108p01.html>

5 — Dr Vreede—Astronomical Letters — available as a book online

6— Dr Friedwart Husemann— 'Equisetum, the Kidney and the Planet Venus'

[https://www.google.com/url?](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjsIMbfxIDZAhVEo5QKHQQEBowQFggxMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.anthromed.org%2FArticle.aspx%3Fartpk%3D697&usg=AOvVaw2fq4v98pOpq8L09O5_wzXO)

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Please read the whole of the original 1910 lecture, to see in what context RS comments were made.

1910 Lecture Summary

The question of the lecture is 'the contrast between masculine and feminine'

- masculine and feminine arose after the old Lemurian time
- Are they born out of cosmic contrast?
- First contrast is between Sun and Earth, which expresses as the division between the Nerve sense system and the metabolic system, and provides humanities vertical axis, but has no influence on 'sexes'.
- Second contrast is between masculine and feminine, mirrored in the contrast between comets and lunar nature.
- Everything that is feminine appears to clairvoyant vision as if it had not advanced beyond a certain stage of evolution, it had remained behind, at a more spiritual stage. In its form it has not descended so deeply into matter.
- The male has advanced into matter beyond the average stage
- Comet has not advanced to the normal stage of the Sun and Earth development, and corresponds to the feminine.
- Lunar existence is the counterpart of the masculine existence.
- The present Moon separated from the Earth, and no longer represents the stage of evolution of the old Moon. It has moved on and 'fallen into torpor' in so far as its material side is concerned.
- Comets represent the relationship of the ancient Moon to the Sun during the ancient Moon evolution.
- masculine and feminine contrast is thus reversed for the etheric bodies of male and female, and so are the cometary and lunar effects"
- The cosmic feminine shoots in from time to time, stirs up existence from the depths of nature existing before the dawn of history—as what is done by a woman out of passion and feeling rather than the reasonable masculine judgment. Comets = irregularity, Moon = regularity
- Feminine spiritual life projects something primitive and elemental
- Male brain is more rigid and resistant, while the female brain can follow what is new in our way of looking at the world.
- Comets herald a development of the I. Different comets in different ways. Halley's comet brings a move towards materialism for example.

As a summary RS says

Cosmic regularity comes with the Moon, while 'something new' comes with the comets. The example of a child coming into a family and the changes this brings, is given.

In opposition to his 1910 male female references for the comets is this statement. In a lecture from the Astronomy course given on the 8th January 1921 we have

"Now that we have ascertained all this about the cometary bodies, let me compare the relation between our planetary system and the comets, to what is there in the ovum, the female germ-cell, in its relation to the male element, the fertilizing sperm. Try to imagine, try to visualise the two processes, as you might actually see them. There is the planetary system: it receives something new into itself namely the effects of a comet. There is the ovum, it receives into itself the fertilising effect of the male cell, the spermatozoid"

Here we have the comets as a male disturbing influence coming into the existing stable female. In this example RS uses the whole planetary system as an image of 'stability', not just the Moon, as was done in 1910.

The key image from both these passages, is that **the comets are a disruptive force**, whether it be described metaphorically as either masculine or feminine. This creates images of the Comets as an influence akin to the revolutionary planet Uranus, than the Venusian / Libra influences otherwise associated with Equisetum (6)

Hugh's article.

The section of relevance, within the article is the second section entitled 'Equisetum in the context of the Cosmic Forces Within our Solar System'. With Hugh's permission I can reproduce it here. There are then two further sections needing comment.

(A) "Of the nine preparations, it is very easy to identify BD #500 with the Earth, and BD #501 with the Sun. Almost every- one who has approached this question assigns the Yarrow Preparation, BD #502, to the planet Venus; the Chamomile Preparation, BD #503, to Mercury; and the Dandelion Preparation, BD #506 to the planet Jupiter. With respect to the remaining principal members of the solar system, Moon, Mars and Saturn, my perception differs substantially from other views that have been expressed. (see Hugh Lovel, and Maria Thun's preparation relationships. Courtney's are the same as Dr Lievegoed, which I consider the majority view) My scheme assigns **the Moon to the Oak Bark Preparation, BD #505**; Mars to the Stinging Nettle Preparation, BD #504; and finally Saturn, the outermost planet of the visible solar system, to the Valerian Preparation, BD#507. At first glance, one can presume that the solar system assignments are now essentially complete, and need not concern oneself with Equisetum as a bona fide biodynamic preparation; if in fact it is merely something confined to use as an anti-fungal agent.

However, in my reading of other lecture cycles by Steiner, I found a number of intriguing concepts and images. In the first place, Steiner identifies the Lemurian age as the time of the separation of the Moon from the Earth, and also describes the Earth of Lemurian times as one of highly active and flexible growth forces, especially prior to that separation. Geologically, the Equisetum plant family was extremely abundant during this same age which is correlated with the Mesozoic period by Eugen Kolisko. Numerous fossils of Equisetum plants are found in seams of coal throughout the world, and such plants have been determined to have grown to heights of eighty feet or more and fossil remains have been found in as many as seventy-six layers one on top of the other with clay or shale layers interspersed. Such a finding serves to confirm the possibility of the highly active growth forces mentioned by Steiner.

The Lemurian age is also identified by Steiner as a re-capitulation of the "Old Moon" incarnation of the Earth which immediately preceded our present Earth. In further descriptions of Lemurian times, Steiner assigns a very prominent member group of our solar system, which he identifies as the Comet, as belonging to this

age. Steiner states that a Comet is born out of the Sun, and dies into the Sun. The Sun can thus be identified with a cosmic/ silica force (BD #501 from the centre of the solar system, while the Comet can be identified with a cosmic/silica force (BD #508) from the periphery of the solar system. Very specifically, Steiner also describes the Comet as the bearer of the *"primal feminine force"* which opposes the *"primal masculine force"* of the Moon. When one examines the form of the Comet and its pattern of periodic return and then turns to Equisetum arvense and takes a close look at its form, one can see in the physical expression of this plant the same pattern of periodicity in the leaf or frond whorl intervals that are expressed in the Comet. When one further understands that Steiner advises the use of Equisetum as the carrier of a counter force to Moon forces and assigns to the Moon a *"primal masculine"* character, it is not out of order to understand the Equisetum plant as a carrier of *"primal feminine"* forces. What can better serve to harness or balance *"primal masculine"* (Moon/Watery) forces than a *"primal feminine"* (Comet/Equisetum) force? Thus, if/when the Moon force is either too strong or too weak, Equisetum is the appropriate remedy. The key to the timing of application of Equisetum lies in taking note of whether conditions are too wet (Moon force too strong), or whether conditions are too dry (Moon force too weak). In the former case, one is more likely to achieve the desired results if the application is made when the Moon is in a Fire or Fruit constellation. In the case of a drought, if one makes the application when the Moon is in a Water or Leaf constellation, the probability of some moisture relief is much more likely."

(B) HC describes how 508 was added to a collection of other preparations, as sequential sprays over a series of days, and how this process brought rain. He deduces that this proves 508 has control of moisture. He did not explain how he concluded this one preparations activity, from the other 6 he used.

(C) A following section with comments about peppering and 'Equisetum as the ONLY way to normalise Moon forces' ,also needs comment. But firstly let us review the above passages.

The first paragraph regarding the BD preps and their planetary rulership is straight forward. The next paragraphs are best described as an associative stream of consciousness. He pulls all sorts of references together, with no definition, and pops out a very challenging conclusion. — Moon is masculine .

His stream of thought goes—

- (1) Lemurian age is the separation of Moon from the Earth. This is a sub harmonic of the Old Moon period, while the Mesozoic period is a sub harmonic of the Lemurian Age. The Mesozoic is when the coal seams were laid down. This is a highly active period of growth forces
- (2) Equisetum was abundant during this time
- (3) Steiner identifies the comets as belonging to the Lemurian period
- (4) Comets are born of the Sun and dies in the Sun— so Sun is 501 is cosmic /silica force, and the comet as a peripheral Silica = 508
- (5) Comets as 'primal feminine force' opposing 'primal masculine force' of the Moon
- (6) Comet form and periodicity = Equisetum wispy fronds and whorls as an image of this
- (7) Equisetum is a counter forces to the Moon (Lec 6) and Moon = Masculine = Equisetum =Feminine
- (8) So if Moon force is either too strong or too weak then Equisetum is the answer
- (9) Application is to be controlled by when Eq is applied too dry use water constellation, too wet use Fire.

My Reply

- (1) Yes Ok
- (2) Equisetum was not alone during this period. Ferns and Clubroots were the other main species found in the coal deposits during this period. Grohmann characterises the Ferns as the leaf, Equisetum as the stem and Clubroots as the fruit aspects of the 'primeval' plant. The three parts as it were of the one plant. So Equisetum as the stem is seen as 'the middle'. One of the other images that comes to us from the Lemurian period, is that it was prior to the division of the sexes, and also the body into the three systems, Head Rhythmic and Metabolic. Thus Equisetum is seen as being able to **harmonise** the working of the above with the below. Again emphasising its 'middle' role.
- (3) Yes

(4) In my understanding of the process of creation, everything is born from a Sun or a supernova (exploding star). It is now considered—and Dr Vreede supports this— that the comets are sourced from the Kieper belt or the Oort Cloud, both of which sit outside of our Solar system. In the creation process, we know that the Sun excretes 'cosmic dust' and that this moves outwards and along the horizontal plane of the Solar system. The planets vacuum up a certain amount of this. In our case we accumulate 100,000 tons of cosmic dust each year. What is not captured by the Planets moves on out, past Pluto and accumulates in the Kieper belt and Oort Cloud. So it is fair to say all this has come from a Sun. These 'rocks' are moved out of their stationary orbits by collisions or the 'gravitational pull' of passing objects, which then begin their journey towards the Sun. Some are drawn into the Sun , while many others do not. Some do not return and disappear into space. So this 'Sun child' image is somewhat stretched, given everything is a Sun child.

HC then jumps to the association of Horn Silica as 'central Sun and thus central Silica and Equisetum as peripheral Silica. This is a BIG jump. In Part 1 of this article I explored the difference between these two preparations and several essential difference arose. (a) Horn Silica is made from Quartz, while Equisetum is Silicic acid with a significant quantity of Sulphur. (b) Quartz, an fairly inert element, and works from the Nerve Sense system downwards, while Silicic acid, is water saturated quartz and has been taken up by life process, is mobile and found predominately in the top of the plant, deposited there during transpiration. As such it is an internal element of life, and especially active through metabolic processes, that work upwards towards the head, in humans. Silica is found on the periphery of the body as a skin and hair, but as an expression of a inner process. In this way Equisetum is the Cosmic Silica bought to Earth and bound into life, as opposed to the Quartz which is an outer element that continues to accumulate the Cosmic Silica from outside onto itself. So if anything Quartz is the external or peripheral Silica coming to the Earth, while Equisetum is the 'internal' Quartz being bound in Life and carried back outwards by plants.

(5) The comets are feminine and Moon is Masculine statement has to be seen within the context within which RS was trying to indicate. This is Comets are hysteric, intuitive and spontaneous change bringers that wishes to upset the staid autistic orderliness of the manifest life. This is the message. The 1921 reversal of roles within the metaphor shows the disruptive influence of the comets is what is important, and not the 'sex' classification.

Is equisetum disruptive? I do not get that sense. I see it as the selfless servant of the needs of the time. RS comments that Silica is not 'desirous', and in Equisetum it works tirelessly to 'drain the swamp' in its natural habitat. In the human body its task is to bring the Internal Astral to bear in its service of the endless sorting needs of the Kidneys, and we have an image of the gracious host, that only wants everyone to enjoy themselves, providing whatever the blood needs. The Kidneys 'calm the Astral waters'. These are Venus and specifically Libra images. Hardly the rabble rouser image we are given of the Comets.

(6) Yes this image of the fronds and the whorls has some imaginative relevance. However Pinus species have similar traits, which gives some weight to Lovel's suggestion of a Saturnian rulership for Equisetum.

(7) Equisetum is a counter forces to the Moon (lec 6) ; and Moon = Masculine, therefore Equisetum = Feminine

Here is the big jump of Anthroposophical Agricultural imagination that needs addressing.

The first part of this statement is correct. Dr Steiner does present this image in the 6th lecture. After describing the Moon forces as an expression of a overly wet winter followed by a wet spring and combined with a Full Moon, he describes overly abundant forces of vitality, pushing upwards out of the Earth, that leads to rotting fungus.

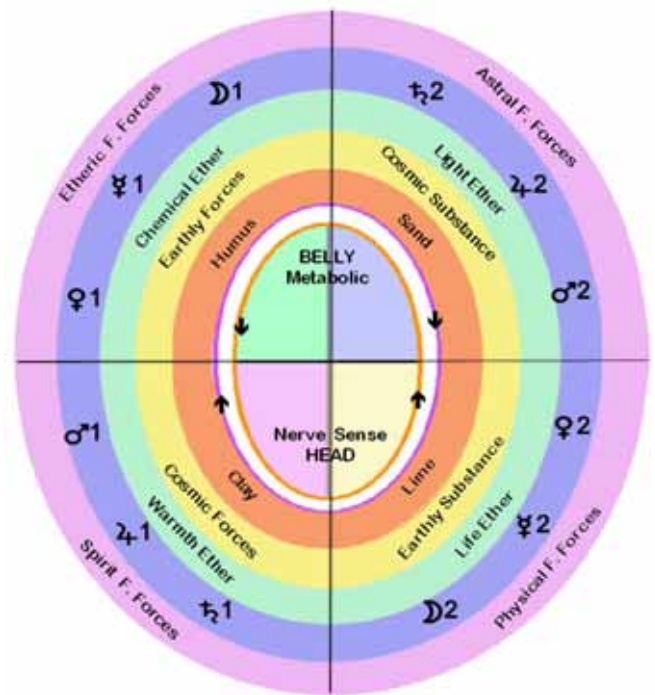
Where is the male imagery here?

This comment does not stand alone. It is in the 6th lecture and so has to stand within the context of the rest of the course. Throughout which we have continually seen the Moon as part of the inner planet group. They are associated with reproduction, growth and cell division as opposed to the outer planets that are associated with forces of light and warmth, nutritive quality and forces of differentiation. In the 4th lecture the Sun is

associated with Silica and the nerve sense, front of the animal, while the Moon is associated with Calcium and the metabolic rear end of the cow.

These 'simple' images become complicated, when we see the plant and soil are up ended animals. The 'Sun' Head / nerve sense is in the soil and the 'Moon' metabolic region of the plant is above the soil. So the lecture 6 passage is saying that there is too much vitality (etheric) coming from the head and pushing into the metabolism. I suspect this would lead to inflammatory illness in the human.

For Biodynamics this story highlights the inherent 'theological difficulties' it has aligning it various stories, until we take Dr Steiner's lecture 8 diagrams seriously. For example if the soil is all nerve sense, then the activity we find there will only be contractive and we would only have tap rooted plants. Yet we have plenty of evidence of expansive growth both under the soil and coming from the soil. Lecture 8 shows us clearly that there are both 'Cosmic and Earthly' activities taking place in the soil and above it. The overly exuberant expansive activity RS talks of in lecture 6, is the Earthly Substance activity of the inner planets. This is an expression of the feminine reproductive activity coming from the soil outwards. This activity is responsible for the tissue formation of the plant along with the supply of cation elements to the plant. To move into space though, it needs to be carried by the Silica based Cosmic Force stream of growth, we see most prominent in the 'spring flush', which is supported by the activity of Boron and Clay. Indeed in the lecture 6 story this upward Silica force is swamped and suppressed by the dominant female active in the soil.



RS solution is to apply the metabolic strengthener Equisetum. However Equisetum, is a silica being, and Silica's basic activity is to differentiate and discern what is good and what is not. This is a Spirit / Astral activity of the masculine kind, usually associated with the Nerve Sense system. With the kidneys though, we see they are a nerve sense process that has migrated to the metabolism. When they shrink and stop working it is because the Internal Astral, has been forced out by some form of 'World Astral' activity, which in turn stops the working of the expansive Internal Etheric, and the kidney shrinks. Equisetum's task is to restimulate the activity of the Internal Astral, to push off the World Astral, allowing itself to reconnect with the Internal Etheric, bringing movement so the Etheric's expansive healing work can continue. Once this normal metabolic function is established it can push back against the upward moving Moon forces from the soil.

This means within the lecture 4 context, it is a little unclear that Equisetum, as a Silica herb, is a male activity working within a female world. (Belly Moon) . However it is more clearly understood when seen within the lecture 8 context, where Equisetum is strengthening the Cosmic Substance / male force, so as it can work with the Earthly Forces / Etheric activity, so both can then moderate an overly active female activity, coming from below.

So going forth and making this association of Moon as Male without addressing the context of the Agriculture Course is somewhat mischievous. What neophyte can make this clarification?

(8) Equisetum when water is too strong or too weak.

I have not experienced this so I can not speak from experience here. However, when we look at the role of the Kidneys, it too plays this role of balancing the water within the body. If there is too little it holds it back

and if there is too much it sends it off to the bladder.

Equisetum as a human remedy, is only used for shrunken kidney, and not in the case of swollen kidney. Swollen kidneys shows as water retention –Edema, and in the inability to process nitrogen.

In the case of 'excessive soil vitality' , pushing towards the metabolic sphere, we have the conditions that could manifest as swollen kidney. In this case, excessive Etheric processes in the head (often causing Hydrocephalus and excessive salt processes) work downward, displacing the kidneys Spirit order and inflammation occurs. I believe it is more common to describe swollen kidneys as the Metabolic Spirit, loses hold of the Etheric / Astral interaction in the metabolic. The Etheric goes its own way and water is not processed and Edema occurs. So it is a strange image to translate to Humans, given Equisetum is not used for this illness.

In the Agriculture Course RS is using Equisetum to perform a function in a plant, that it does not achieve in the human. This suggests, given plants do not have kidneys, that in the plant the processes are more general. So as described earlier, Equisetum, firstly strengthens the interaction of the Etheric / Earthly forces and the Astral Cosmic Substance, within the whole metabolic function, which as a general metabolic function, then pushes downwards against the upward Etheric processes from the soil, thus limiting its effect.

As to how it works against drought. I can only surmise that once the Earthly Forces are brought back into motion, the plant may well have greater access the atmospheric Etheric, present in the dew. However I have not experienced this effect, and I look forward to discovering its drought controlling influence.

(9) This may well be the controlling device.

(B) Regarding the section on sequential spraying

Hugh Lovel talks of his understanding of 'making rain', and it is always in the context of an organised or unorganised atmosphere. When the atmosphere has order and rhythm it will rain. Thus the goal of sequential spraying to 'pump up the order'. The spraying of cosmic preps in the morning with the spraying of the Earthly preps in the evening over a period of days creates movement between expansion and contraction which leads to an ordering of the atmosphere, which allows the rain to accumulate and fall.

Within this context it is impossible to discern that it was the Equisetum that was achieving the balancing of the water and making rain. Hugh C does not provide any specific images of Equisetum's unique controlling role in this practice. So again this is a huge assumption based upon the images provided.

(C) 'Equisetum as Primary Support for Peppering and for the Farm Individuality'

This section talks essentially as if Equisetum is all we have in our toolbox, as imaged in the comment, ' the other planetary activities can not fully function if the Moon forces are not normalised...and this can only be achieved by the use of Equisetum'.

What are all the other preparations doing? Do they not have their own activity which pushes against all the others? Indeed all the other preparations are working 'against the Moon'. The plants 'balance' sits in the middle of all the planetary activity, any one process working too strongly will upset this balance.

Hugh speaks early on in the article that Equisetum should only be used after all the other preparations have been applied. It now seems a contradiction to say only Equisetum can control the Moon? In particular HC appears to have also missed the section on the working of the Oak Bark preparation in lecture 5. He has acknowledged that Oak Bark is the Moon prep, but makes no further reference to it. I quoted the whole of the piece about Oak Bark in Part 1, so please refer to it. RS's suggestion is that it helps to pull an overly active Etheric activity back into the Earth, without any shocks. Lecture 6 describes just this situation. Oak Bark is Equisetum's natural partner preparation in the direct control of excessive Moon forces.

Further to this, clay strengthens the upward moving Silica process, that is suppressed by the strong Moon processes active in the Earth. So not only do all the other preps push against the Moon activity but so does Clay and specifically Oak Bark. Equisetum has its specific task in amongst all the others. Overuse of this one preparation, due to HC suggested 'central role', may well see an over activity of its elements, Silica and

Sulphur, which in turn will effect how Phosphorus in particular acts.

Comets are Astral cleansers

While this was not one of HC points, it is a significant aspect of comets emphasised by both Steiner and Vreede. It is fair to say though that Equisetum is a 'astral being'.

RS image is that comets, collect the negative Astral debris humans send into the solar system and carry it out into the cosmos to be dispersed. RS in particular gives the image of Comets disappearing into the Ether and reappearing as they come back through the Mars sphere. Vreede is not so strong on this image, as she has a stronger understanding of their cycling through the Oort cloud. RS image of the comets though, is they are cosmic wanderers and beings of the Cosmic sphere. They are collecting what has become World Astrality and dispersing it into the Cosmic Astrality.

Equisetum on the other hand is a being concerned with the internal astrality and bringing internal healing by combining with the etheric, to facilitate its healing. So while both are concerned with Astral cleansing, their spheres and modes of action are quite different.

RS indicates all comets have different 'messages'. He was specific when he said they have some message for the development of I in humans. He did not enlarge on any other than Halley's comet. This has the task of bringing more materialism to humanity. Both these points, are very male images. We can not deduce, 'materialism' is the task of all comets, and we have to leave them as being 'disruptive revolutionaries'.

Planetary Ruler ?

RS characterisation of comets as disrupters of the norm, is not the image I have of Equisetum.

It is a plant that works to balance opposites, and works intimately inside organisms. It is Silica that has been brought to life as a dutiful worker, helping the Kidneys sense all that comes towards it. If the Astrality is the Head contractor, carrying out the Spirit's master plan, then Equisetum is the job foreman, dealing with the day to day details of keeping everything on track, within the Kidneys. He is hardly an erratic interloper from outer space, disturbing the otherwise natural order of things. He is the strengthener of the Internal Astral, not the World Astral. Specifically, it pushes out any 'World Astral' excesses within the Kidney and reestablishes its active relationship with the Internal Etheric, within the Kidneys, so that water—and other elements—can be processed as needs be. The Kidneys balance things, one day excreting more water and minerals, and the next holding them back. It carries out a sensitive balancing act. When we look for the planetary processes involved in this we find both Venus and Mars. More specifically Venus 2 and Mars 1. With Mars 1 we see the moderating of the incoming astral forces and sensory impressions, along with the processing of nitrogen flows in the body, while with Venus 2 we have the excretory processes in general. Within Biodynamics, the Venus prep, Yarrow, opens the Etheric to receive the Astral, while the Mars prep, Nettle, harmonises the Astrality and helps it bind with the Etheric. These are similar images that arise when we investigate Equisetum's mode of action. Equisetum sits between and supports these two activities.

All this talk of balance and the kidneys, naturally brings images of the constellation of Libra, ruled by Venus, the traditional ruler of the Kidneys. Husemann's study gives weight to this.

If we are looking for a 'Silica / outer planet ruler' for Equisetum it would be the planetoid Chiron, the Centaur, that cycles between Saturn and Uranus. He is the 'wounded healer', who dedicated himself to bringing healing to the Humans. Being the 'planet' that moves between the personal Astral sphere and the Collective Unconscious, he brings gentle awakenings about the issues at hand, and how to go about healing them. He has none of the rough manners of the 'healings' brought by Uranus and Pluto, with his 'awakenings' being more of the 'aha' nature. Like the kidneys, he gently sifts the issues and keeps what is good and excretes what is no longer needed. Equisetum is 'the nurse' that supports this action, not the eccentric doctor 'House'.

Chiron, the Centaur is a being of an earlier time, when human and animals had not yet defined their

divisions, as was the case in Lemurian. He brings gentle healing and awakening, to our astral illnesses. He lives out there in the Silica realm of the outer planets, and is very much the servant helping where he can.

Chiron is also the first guardian of the threshold. He is the guy that asks us to reflect on our 'astral' journey after death, and what we might consider to do if we are to take another life. I wonder if this is reflected in our choice of taking Equisetum, where we are deciding to be healthy, process our astral disturbances, and lead a balanced life.....

Conclusion

I trust it is obvious, when more 'light' is brought to bear on this topic, that Equisetum is indeed the very opposite of the character, Hugh would like us to believe it is. Also that if his Moon is Male conjecture is to gain any hold upon the Biodynamic worldview, that much more evidence of such needs to be provided, and all of the Moon as Female images Dr Steiner provides within the course, need to be addressed and explained away.

Biodynamics is in a very difficult time. It is growing in popularity and so many more people are struggling with its unusual imagery. Yet, its theology is confused, misunderstood and misrepresented by people 'of personal authority'. There is no 'central defense' committee and so 'any old story will do'. Students are left to flounder in an ocean of belief and conjecture, where 'ideas' such as Hugh has presented here, can gain traction and credibility, even though they directly challenge the foundational images of the Agriculture Course. Where are the critical abilities of our magazine editors, at least?

No wonder the rational world find Biodynamics a place of 'faith and fairies'.

Given Biodynamics has worked itself into a fantasyland of confusion, where it is little more than 'organics with the preps', based upon 'any old story', I recommend it looks to its sister movement of Anthroposophical Medicine, for theological and practical guidance. Over the last 90 years their 'doctorial' dedication to their Goethean experience, has developed Dr Steiner's indications into a very comprehensive and comprehensible worldview, that brings clarity to what is provided to us in the Agriculture lectures. These lectures do make sense, they can be comprehended and the questions that face us can be answered, when our lectures are seen within the greater context provided by the 100 or so medical lectures. These too are our heritage. The medical community has answered the many difficult illnesses they have been faced with, while staying true to Dr Steiner's suggestions, and so can we. Biodynamics is way more than 'organics plus the preps'. It is an energetic science that allows us to consciously control the forces and 'bodies' active behind manifestation. The understanding is here now and available to us. A quantum leap in Biodynamic understanding and actions can occur NOW. What is in the way, but the male autism RS talks of in his 1910 lecture? Do we develop 'one death at a time' or can we leap to truth NOW.

To every teacher of Biodynamics— ask them if they understand the Agriculture Lectures. If they say they can not be understood, ask if they have studied the medical lectures? If they have not, then move on, you are wasting your time, you have a theological fanatic in front of you. The understanding and practice is present in the world now, the Apop doctors have it, and it is available to us.

To read the Agriculture Lectures seen through the eyes of the medical lectures see 'Energetic Activities' in the Books section of www.garudabd.org. If you wish to join a community dedicated to this task, join us at www.bdagcollege.org. This is a collegial society dedicated to secular energetic biodynamics referencing the medical movement.